

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated March 23, 2004 the U.S. Patent Examiner has indicated that Claim Nos. 16 – 31 are pending in the subject application. Of these claims, Claim Nos. 18 – 31 have been rejected and Claim Nos. 16 and 17 have been objected to. The U.S. Patent Examiner further states that the drawings filed on September 5, 2000 are acceptable.

In response to Paragraph No. 2 of the Office Action, Applicant has amended the priority statement found in the first sentence of the Specification to more properly advise readers of the status of the subject application. The careful attention of the U.S. Patent Examiner to this detail has been appreciated.

In response to Paragraph No. 3 of the Office Action, Applicant has kindly requested the U.S. Patent Examiner to reinstate the originally filed Abstract of the Specification with amendments as made by the Applicant. It is believed that the originally filed Abstract (as currently amended) will meet with the U.S. Patent Examiner's approval.

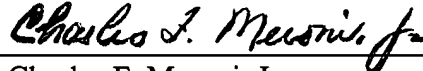
In response to Paragraph No. 4, Applicant has amended Claim Nos. 16, 17, and 19 to cure the informalities as noted by the U.S. Patent Examiner. Again, the careful, detail-oriented inspections of the U.S. Patent Examiner have been appreciated. It is believed that Claim Nos. 16 and 17, having been cured of objectionable informalities, are now in immediate condition for allowance.

In response to Paragraph Nos. 5 and 6, Applicant has amended Claim No. 18 in an attempt to cure the lack of antecedent basis for the language, "said insert member". In this regard, the singular term "member" has been deleted and the plural term "members" has been inserted. It is now believed that there is sufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said insert members". Further, the U.S. Patent Examiner has rejected Claim Nos. 18, 21, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps. In this regard, Applicant has amended each of Claim Nos. 18, 21, and 27 in attempt to overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112 (second paragraph) rejections of record and it is believed that Claim Nos. 18 – 31, inclusive, are now in immediate condition for allowance.

In light of the foregoing, the U.S. Patent Examiner is kindly requested to reconsider the rejections and objections of record. It is believed that this amended patent application is now in immediate condition for allowance, and such action is kindly requested. If, after a review of this Amendment, issues remain which may be resolved by a telephone interview, the U.S. Patent Examiner is cordially invited to call the Applicants' undersigned attorney.

If attempts to reach the undersigned attorney are not successful, please be advised that Christopher J. Scott, Registration No. 48,647, may also be contacted with regard to this matter. Mr. Scott has been in regular communication with the undersigned regarding the Office Action and this Amendment. Further, Mr. Scott is listed under our firm's Customer Number with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, namely, Customer Number 30114, and thus may be deemed a proper representative of Applicant.

Respectfully submitted,
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